

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An electronic message alerting module, comprising:
  - 5 a plurality of priority alert profiles, each of said plurality of priority alert profiles associating an electronic message user with at least one telephone number; and
  - an autodialer adapted to dial said at least one telephone number associated with said electronic message user when an electronic
  - 10 message addressed to said electronic message user is received.
2. The electronic message alerting module according to claim 1, further comprising:
  - an alert message adapted for playback to a party
  - 15 successfully called by said autodialer.
3. The electronic message alerting module according to claim 1, wherein:
  - said electronic message is e-mail.
  - 20
4. The electronic message alerting module according to claim 1, wherein:
  - said electronic message alerting module is controlled by an associated e-mail server.
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5. The electronic message alerting module according to claim 1, wherein:
  - said electronic message is controlled by an associated web page based e-mail server.

6. The electronic message alerting module according to claim 1, wherein:

said plurality of alert profiles are managed within a database.

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7. The electronic message alerting module according to claim 6, wherein:

said database is a relational database.

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8. The electronic message alerting module according to claim 1, wherein:

each of said plurality of priority alert profiles further associating at least one electronic message sender with activation of said autodialer, and non-activation of said autodialer upon receipt of an electronic message not including identification of a sender included in a relevant one of said plurality of priority alert profiles for a recipient of said electronic message.

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9. The electronic message alerting module according to claim 8, wherein:

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said electronic message is e-mail.

10. A method of alerting a recipient of an electronic message, comprising:

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identifying a recipient of a received electronic message;  
determining a telephone number for said recipient; and  
dialing said determined telephone number for said recipient of said received electronic message to alert said recipient of said received electronic message.

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11. The method of alerting a recipient of an electronic message according to claim 10, wherein:

said dialing is automatically dialed without requiring user intervention.

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12. The method of alerting a recipient of an electronic message according to claim 11, further comprising:

playing a message relating to receipt of said electronic message if said dialing successfully establishes a telephone call.

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13. The method of alerting a recipient of an electronic message according to claim 10, wherein:

said electronic message is an e-mail message.

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14. The method of alerting a recipient of an electronic message according to claim 10, further comprising:

redialing an alternate telephone number for said recipient of said received electronic message if said dialing is unsuccessful in establishing a telephone call.

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15. The method of alerting a recipient of an electronic message according to claim 14, wherein:

said steps of dialing and redialing are automatic without requiring user intervention.

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16. Apparatus for alerting a recipient of an electronic message, comprising:

means for identifying a recipient of a received electronic message;

5 means for determining a telephone number for said recipient; and

means for dialing a telephone number for said recipient of said received electronic message.

10 17. The apparatus for alerting a recipient of an electronic message according to claim 16, wherein:

said means for dialing automatically dials said telephone number without requiring user intervention.

15 18. The apparatus for alerting a recipient of an electronic message according to claim 17, further comprising:

means for playing a message relating to receipt of said electronic message if said means for dialing successfully establishes a telephone call.

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19. The apparatus for alerting a recipient of an electronic message according to claim 16, wherein:

said electronic message is an e-mail message.

25 20. The apparatus for alerting a recipient of an electronic message according to claim 16, further comprising:

means for redialing an alternate telephone number for said recipient of said received electronic message if said dialing is unsuccessful in establishing a telephone call.

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21. The apparatus for alerting a recipient of an electronic message according to claim 20, wherein:

5       said means for dialing and said means for redialing are automatic without requiring user intervention.

22. A method of alerting a recipient of an electronic message from a given source, comprising:

10       identifying a recipient of a received electronic message;  
      identifying a source of said received electronic message;  
      comparing said source of said electronic message to a predefined list of sources for which to alert said recipient by telephone;  
      and

15       if said source is identified in said predefined list of sources for which to alert said recipient by telephone, dialing a telephone number for said recipient and telephonically alerting said recipient of said received electronic message from a predefined source.

23. The method of alerting a recipient of an electronic message according to claim 22, wherein:

20       said electronic message is an e-mail message.

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